REMARKS

Claims 7-12 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Berg et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,483,667). Applicant traverses the rejection of claims 7-8 because the cited reference fails to disclose (or suggest) a flying head slider that includes, among other things, a front air bearing surface having a front contour extending along parallel datum lines. With respect to claims 9-12, Applicant amended claims 9 and 11 to clarify that the upstream contours of the front air bearing surfaces are set asymmetrical relative to a longitudinal center line of the slider body, and respectfully traverses.

Berg discloses a slider 220, as shown in FIG. 4. The Office Action focuses on risers 232 and 236 as disclosing the structure of the present invention. Riser 232 is positioned on step surface 230, and riser 236 is positioned on step surface 234. The Office Action asserts that the risers 232 and 236 extend along parallel datum lines. More specifically, the Office Action asserts that the bearing surface 150 and the step surface 234 constitute one air bearing surface. Applicant respectfully traverses this statement of the Office Action because the air bearing surface is defined as a surface nearest to the surface of the recording medium when the head slider flies above the recording medium.

The step surface 234 is positioned below the bearing surface 150, as shown in FIG. 4. That is, the step surface 234 is positioned away from the medium surface at a distance beyond the level of the bearing surface 150 when the slider 220 flies above the

recording medium. The contour of the step surface 234 is not a part of the contour of the bearing surface 150.

In contrast, claim 7 has at least a front air bearing surface defined on the front rail. The front rail air bearing surface has a front contour extending along the parallel second datum lines. The parallel second datum lines intersect the first datum line at a predetermined inclined angle. This structure is exemplified as a front air bearing surface 40 shown in FIG. 11 of the present application. Since Berg does not disclose such an air bearing surface, withdrawal of the §102 rejection of independent claim 7 and its depending claim 8 is respectfully requested.

Amended claims 9 and 11 now define the upstream contours of the front air bearing surfaces as being asymmetrical. That is, the contours are asymmetrical relative to the longitudinal center line of the slider body (i.e. both are aligned along the second datum line 72).

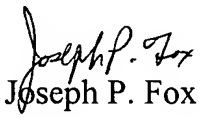
Berg discloses in FIG. 4 two bearing surfaces 150 that are set symmetrical relative to a longitudinal center line of the slider 220. Furthermore, the Office Action indicates that the slider surfaces of Berg are considered symmetrical (page 3, line 1). Since Berg fails to disclose or suggest the upstream contours of the front air bearing surfaces as being set or positioned asymmetrical relative to a longitudinal center line of the slider body, withdrawal of the §102 rejection of claims 9 and 11, as amended, and their respective depending claims 10 and 12 is respectfully requested.

New claim 13 is added and depends from independent claim 7. In addition to the reasons recited above for allowance of claim 7, new claim 13 further features the front contour of the front air bearing surface as being set asymmetrical relative to a longitudinal center line of the slider body. For these reasons, Applicant earnestly solicits allowance of new claim 13.

For all of the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that this Application is in condition for allowance, which is respectfully requested. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned attorney if an interview would expedite prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,

GREER, BURNS & CRAIN, LTD.

By 
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